

Anaesthetic service

This document must be signed by the guarantor and returned to your anaesthesiologist on the day of surgery!!!

Anaesthesia information

An anaesthesiologist is a specialist medical doctor who has trained for at least 13 years, 5 of which are spent specialising in anaesthesiology. This enables the anaesthesiologist to carry out his/her task of monitoring and maintaining your vital signs (breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, temperature ect, keeping you pain free not only throughout but also after your surgery and finally ensuring, as far as possible, a safe and comfortable recovery.

Preceding your operation

After admission to hospital, prior to surgery, you will be reviewed by your anaesthesiologist. Please take this opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have regarding the anaesthesia as well as any questions about the fees. You may receive a mild sedative before surgery to calm and relax you. Every effort is made to do this consultation in the ward, but on occasion, due to unforeseen circumstances, this can take place in the theatre reception. As medical funders have denied admission prior to the day of surgery, in most cases anaesthesiologists have to assess patients on the day of surgery.

Unless otherwise advised by your surgeon, continue to take all your regular medication. Also note that **you should not eat or drink eight hours prior to your surgery**, unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon or anaesthesiologist. Non- compliance may cause your operation to be postponed for safety reasons.

Various forms of Anaesthesia

All types of anaesthesia can be used individually or in combination to achieve the best and safest anaesthetic for each individual patient

General Anaesthesia: This is often called a "GA". You will be put into a state of controlled unconsciousness so that you are not aware of your procedure. This is done using drugs injected into a vein, gases that you inhale or a combination thereof.

Local Anaesthesia: Often called "Local". Using local anaesthetic, a small part of the body is numbed so that you do not feel anything in that area, but remain conscious.

Regional Anaesthesia: *blocks, spinal, epidural.* Local anaesthetic drugs are injected near the bundles of nerves which carry signals from that part of the body to the brain. Whole body parts are made numb. You remain conscious but pain free.

Spinal and epidural blocks: Injections into the lower back are used to temporarily paralyse the nerves of the spinal cord producing numbness of the lower half of the body.

Nerve blocks: Local anaesthetic is injected around a nerve or group of nerves making a single limb numb.

Sedation/Conscious Sedation: Injected drugs or gases are used to keep you calm and slightly sleepy but rousable. This is usually combined with local or regional block for a procedure. Gastrosopies and colonoscopies are often done under sedation.

Your anaesthesiologist will determine the safest and best type of Anaesthesia for your specific case. You are encouraged to ask your anaesthesiologist any questions you may have regarding the type of anaesthesia planned.

Once your surgery has been completed, you will be transferred to the recovery room for continuous monitoring of your vital signs. There may be a period of confusion as you regain consciousness. You will be discharged from the recovery area once signed off by your anaesthesiologist and furthermore **may** be visited after your operation to assess your clinical condition and adequacy of pain control. **Do not drive, operate dangerous equipment or make any important decisions for 24 hours after surgery.** If you are discharged on the day of your procedure, please ensure you have someone to drive you home.

Risks of anaesthesia

Despite preventative measures, advancements in anaesthesia and the best anaesthetic techniques applied, there are still risks involved in anaesthesia. No one can guarantee an incident free anaesthetic. A non-exhaustive list includes the following:

Common side effects: Drowsiness, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, minor damages to the skin, tongue

Rare complications: peripheral and other nerve injuries, bleeding allergic reactions, damage to teeth and caps, airway injuries, abrasions to eyes, soft tissue injury, vascular injury, pneumothorax, muscle pains and aspiration

Extremely rare complications: awareness during general anaesthesia, hypoxia, cardiac arrest, brain damage and even death

With regional anaesthesia, there is a **small risk** of local anaesthetic toxicity, incomplete block, cardiac arrest, headache, neurological injury including paralysis and even death.

Contributory risk factors are drug abuse, smoking, obesity, diabetes, heart, lung or muscle disease. Poorly controlled systemic illness further contributes to the risk. It should be noted that all individuals react differently to all forms of anaesthesia.

Anaesthetic account and consent

Please note that the anaesthetic account is **separate** from the hospital and surgeon account. Depending on your choice of medical aid and/or insurance plan, your health care funder might not cover the account in full. It remains your responsibility to confirm your benefits as well as any exclusions that apply to your procedure. Medical schemes *unilaterally determine* a plan specific payment rate, which may be different to the rate determined by the anaesthesiologist. Be aware that your medical scheme may call this “the 100% rate” but this refers ONLY to their rates.

To enable us to provide the quality service our patients deserve, fees are based on the cost of delivering a service and are benchmarked against other professional services.

The anaesthetic fee comprises of three separate chargeable entities: **pre-operative risk assessment, anaesthetic time and procedure specific anaesthetic fee.** Various factors can affect the cost and

cause the final amount to differ from the cost estimate. A non-exhaustive list include: obesity, age, ICU admission, pain control procedures, unusual operating positions, deliberate control of blood pressure, unplanned or after hour procedures and specialised intra-vascular lines.

It should be duly noted that the fees of anaesthesiologists are time based. It is therefore impossible to confirm an exact amount as the service is completely dependent on the service delivery of your surgeon.

The anaesthesiologist reserves the right to charge for any additional procedure and /or time spent for any reason whatsoever. In the event where any of the above mentioned parties commit a breach of contract, the anaesthesiologist is entitled to take legal action and charge arrears interest as per the national credit Act 34 of 2005.

Please confirm with your surgeon who your anaesthesiologist will be for your procedure and contact the relevant anaesthetic practice for a cost estimate.

Personal information

The guarantor, undersigned patient, responsible person, legal guardian or surety of the patient hereby gives authorisation to the anaesthetic practice to collect, share and exchange credit information concerning them with any credit bureau or any other person or corporation with whom they may have had or may have financial dealings as well as where applicable, other information requested pursuant to, or in any circumstances contemplated in the National Credit Act 34 of 2005. Furthermore the practice is given the right to disclose personal medical information such as ICD 10 codes and clinical information pertaining to the patient to its legal representative or debt collectors provided that such information is treated as confidential and in good faith and only insofar as it is necessary for debt collecting.

Consent

Obtaining written anaesthetic consent is a legal prerequisite; therefor kindly complete the **GREEN anaesthetic form. Please return it to the anaesthesiologist on the day of surgery.** It is an important document as it provides your anaesthesiologist with details regarding your medical and surgical history.

We would like to assure you of our highest commitment to quality healthcare and service and would like to wish you a speedy recovery.

I confirm that I have read and fully understood the information and agree to the conditions mentioned above, including the risks of possible complications inherent to anaesthesia, set out herein and confirm that I have been given the opportunity to discuss my concerns and questions.

Please sign here

Name and surname	Signed	Date
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